



FOCUS AREA 5: Conservation of biodiversity

Policy position

Moira Shire acknowledges:

- Sound ecological management is critical to ensuring long-term social wellbeing and economic sustainability;
- A legitimate and urgent need for greater action to mitigate degradation of biodiversity; and
- The value of working collaboratively with regional, state and federal authorities, land owners and the general public.

Moira Shire Council will:

- Implement Council's legislative and policy responsibilities to protect the health of ecological systems;
- Ensure that Council's actions and land management practices incorporate appropriate biodiversity conservation measures and demonstrate a leading example to others;
- Seek and support investment in biodiversity conservation priority areas in Moira Shire; and
- Encourage private and public land stewardship and management practices which benefit biodiversity conservation.

Policy rationale

Council recognises:

- Increasing the extent and quality of native vegetation and habitat will address adverse consequences e.g. declining species diversity, loss of soil productivity;
- The need to implement opportunities that improve adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change on biodiversity;
- Changing land use can exacerbate risks or create opportunities e.g. irrigation infrastructure renewal, bio-diverse carbon sequestration; and
- Policy and regulatory change can exacerbate risks and/or create opportunities e.g. native vegetation regulation, planned burning, environmental water delivery, investment priorities.

Long-term target

Contribute towards Goulburn Broken Catchment Biodiversity Strategy targets:

1. Increase the extent of native vegetation in fragmented landscapes by 70,000ha by 2030.
2. Improve the quality of 90% of existing habitat by 10% by 2030.
3. Increase the population viability of 20 flagship species by 2030.

Performance Indicators (by 2021)

1. Increased the area under conservation covenants and biodiversity management agreements in Moira Shire from 2016 levels by an average of 10% per year over 4 years.
2. Actively supported a minimum of two large-scale multi-partner programs per year which deliver biodiversity conservation outcomes.
3. Achieved a 'net gain' in native vegetation for Council activities*.

**Where actions to compensate unavoidable losses contribute to longer term gains in quality and quantity.*

Example actions

- Continue to develop and invest in partnerships (see Appendix 2 for examples).
- Implement and monitor Council's Net Gain program to ensure it contributes to an overall gain in the quantity and quality of native vegetation and habitat.
- Establish a pilot program in Moira Shire to attract investment via a Goulburn Broken regional biodiversity fund.
- Maintain membership of the Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group, Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network and the Local Government Agricultural Floodplains Reference Group.
- Provide ongoing best practice roadside management training program for Council staff.
- Respond to, monitor and report natural resource management requests, referrals and enquiries.
- Seek opportunities to apply the successful model used in the Fruit Industry Employment Program to achieve significant biodiversity outcomes.